

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 479  
By Eckles

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Coach Gary Rankin and the 1997 Riverdale High School football team on winning the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Division 1, Class 5-A state championship.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly is proud to salute our great athletic teams who work hard, make sacrifices, perform with rarely equaled excellence and win state championships; and

WHEREAS, one such memorable squad, the 1997 Riverdale High School football team, recently won high school football's most cherished prize, the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, Division 1, Class 5-A state championship, with a victory in the Clinic Bowl; and

WHEREAS, during their stellar regular season, Riverdale compiled a superb 9-1 record, impressively defeating Fern Creek, Kentucky 36-8, Franklin County 46-0, Smyrna 47-0, Columbia 35-10, Lebanon 34-7, Coffee County 34-13, Lincoln County 42-0, Warren County 56-13, and Oakland 42-10; and

WHEREAS, they also won the coveted Region 4 title; and

WHEREAS, in the tough Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Division 1, Class 5-A state playoffs, the Warriors won their first-round joust against the Cookeville Cavaliers 48-14; defeated the Soddy Daisy Trojans in an epic second-round contest, 20-10; out fought the

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McMinn County Cherokees 41-0 in the quarter finals; and sent the Sevier County Smokey Bears into hibernation 45-23 in semi final action; and

WHEREAS, the awesome Riverdale team then defeated Munford 34-18 to win the historic Clinic Bowl title game, held at Dudley Stadium, in Nashville, on Saturday, December 6, 1997; and

WHEREAS, their puissant offense scored a phenomenal 580 points, an average of 39 per game; while their stingy defense allowed a mere 167 points, an average of 11 per game; and

WHEREAS, highly regarded Head Coach Gary Rankin, who also serves admirably as the school's Athletic Director, has instilled in his players a strong work ethic, and has inspired them to make sacrifices for the good of the team, to always strive to be the best and to be winners both on the gridiron and on the field of life; and

WHEREAS, Coach Rankin was deservedly recognized as the Class 5-A Coach of the Year and the Class 5-A Mid-State Coach of the Year; and

WHEREAS, his capable staff included: Assistant Coaches Greg Wyant, Steve Britton, Brad Cowan, Ron Crawford, David Watson, Rickey Field, Elaina Pincheon, and Lamar Davis; and

WHEREAS, the team leaders were: senior quarterback-defensive back Eric Locke, who was chosen Class 5-A American General "Mr. Football", *USA Today* State Player of the Year, All-State, Clinic Bowl Offensive and Defensive Most Valuable Player, Region 4 Most Valuable Player, and the Mid-State Most Valuable Player; senior Jon Kelly, who was named All-State, All-Region, and All-Mid-State; junior Todd Howard, who was selected All-State, All-Region, and All-Mid-State; senior Kollas Hughes, an All-Region and All-Mid-State honoree; junior Rashad Watkins, honored as All-Region and All-Mid-State; junior Jeremy Davis, All-Region and All-Mid-State; and senior Nick Patterson, All-Region; and

WHEREAS, the complete 1997 Riverdale High School football roster included: seniors Eric Locke, Mitchell Carmoski, Quentez Nelson, Jason Hill, Vincent Watkins, Dario Hodge,

Craig Garrison, Jeremy L. Davis, Chad Mackens, Marcus Limbaugh, Jon Kelley, Scott Lowman, Harrison Mullins, Darnell Gresham, Kolas Hughes, Nick Patterson, and Eric Greer; juniors, Kyle Jones, Donnie Ayers, Dejuan Duke, Aundrel Cummings, Todd Howard, Donte Bell, Keane McDonald, Rashad Watkins, Jeremy R. Davis, Billy Arrasmith, Troy Broughton, Gene Thorpe, Matt Sawyer, Micheal Smallwood, Brian Travis, Ryan Gjertson, Chris Brown, Rashawn Ray, Rusty Stephens, Josh Stewart and Joe Moos; sophomores, Ron Atkins, Shawn Sanford, Deran Martin, Conner Barnett, Guy Freeman, Brad Garrett, Chance Dittfurth, Jessie Chesterfield, Larry Verge, Tarrius Davis, Aaron Macedo, Jonathan Davis, Gabriel Besleaga, Bill Massaquoi, Justin Prince, Wes Denney, Malachi Hernandez, Donald Morris, Walker Thomas, Justin Waller, Terry Daniels, Kevon Bane, Rhett Bass, Corneice Hoke, Andy Davis, and Matthew Young; and freshman, Marvin Smith; and

WHEREAS, the Warriors have been strongly encouraged by their fine principal, Tom Nolan and Assistant Principals, Robert James, Gail Vick, and Andrea Anthony; and

WHEREAS, the team doctors, Tom Johns and Michael Jordan, kept the team members as healthy as possible; and

WHEREAS, the hard-working student trainers were: Summer King, Sara Tanksley, Lauren Adkins, Shellie Lytle, and Todd Johnson; the diligent managers were: Amanda Wright, Alisha Toy, Stephanie Wright, Chris Moorehead, Randy Shaw, Emily Trail, and Eric Hennessee; and the important film duties were expertly handled by Neal Watson; and

WHEREAS, the enthusiastic cheerleaders, under the excellent sponsorship of Barbara Collie, were: Captain Sara Spears, Captain Natalie Wilson, Terra Wielgus, Tracie Sisco, Jaclyn Harney, Kristy Fisher, Paige Hargett, Melissa Ray, Julia Ray, Jennifer Boyce, Ashley Scott, Jennifer Gentry, Stephanie Warren and Ashley Todt; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause to specially recognize the many accomplishments of this great team; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor and congratulate Coach Gary Rankin and the 1997 Riverdale High School football team, a team who has been a tremendous credit to their school, to Murfreesboro, to Tennessee and to high school athletics.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared for presentation to the school and to each person named above, with this final clause omitted from such copy.